

MONTHLY NOTES  
OF THE  
**Library Association**  
of the United Kingdom.

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At the meeting on Friday, July 1, 1881, a paper will be read by Mr. G. R. HUMPHREY, Hon. Librarian of Messrs. F. Braby and Co.'s Library and Club, on "Workmen's Libraries."

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THE Annual Meeting will probably be held on Tuesday, 13th September, 1881, and the following days, at Gray's Inn Hall and Library, on the invitation of the Hon. Society of Gray's Inn.

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SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING.

IN pursuance of the notice printed in our last number (p. 37), a Special General Meeting was held at the London Institution, on Wednesday, May 18, 1881, at 3 p.m., Mr. R. HARRISON, Treasurer, in the chair.

The notice convening the meeting having been read by one of the secretaries, the substance of the letters received from members who were unable to be present was then read. The majority of the writers suggested London as the most convenient place for the annual meeting.

On the motion of the CHAIRMAN, seconded by Mr. C. WALFORD, it was unanimously resolved:—

"That it is desirable to postpone the meeting at Cambridge until next year."

The place for the next Annual Meeting was then considered, and after some discussion it was resolved, on a division,

"That the Annual Meeting of the Association be held in London."

On the motion of the CHAIRMAN it was unanimously resolved that the date of the meeting should be fixed by the Council. A vote of thanks was then passed to the Chairman, and the meeting dissolved.

## JUNE MONTHLY MEETING.

THE eighth Monthly Meeting of the fourth year of the Association was held at the London Institution, on Friday, June 3, 1881, at 8 p.m., Mr. R. HARRISON, Treasurer, in the chair.

The minutes of the previous meeting and those of the Special General Meeting having been read and confirmed, the Ven. Archdeacon Hannah and Mr. W. Harris, who were proposed at the last Monthly Meeting, were unanimously elected.

The Rev. Donald J. Mackay, Canon Precentor and Librarian of St. Ninian's Cathedral, Perth, was reported by the TREASURER as having joined the Association.

In the absence of the writer the Chairman called on one of the secretaries to read the following paper, by Mr. HENRY WILSON:—

## A FRENCH PROVINCIAL LIBRARY—TOURS.

The library of Tours is one of the oldest and richest in France. It has been formed out of the libraries of religious bodies in Touraine, among which were especially distinguished St. Martin's Abbey at Tours, the renowned Abbey of Marmoutiers, in the vicinity of the city, and the metropolitan chapter of St. Gatien, all of them dating, it is needless to remind you, from a high antiquity. Our countryman, Alcuin, the disciple of Bede, was the founder of the Abbey of St. Martin, and there, after actively promoting the cause of education in the dominions of Charlemagne, he retired to superintend the multiplication of precious writings, and watch with affectionate care over the labours of its great scriptorium. The Abbey of Marmoutier was Benedictine, and that is sufficient guarantee for the value of the literary treasures of which it was dispossessed at the Revolution, and which in 1791 were united with the two other collections just mentioned, to form the nucleus of the Municipal Library, which numbers at present about 60,000 volumes.

I have no intention of making an inventory of all the literary lions it contains, but I cannot omit mention of a few of the most remarkable bibliographical treasures. Among the manuscripts, then, we note a Codex Aureus of the eighth century, an Evangelium, which has long ago been despoiled of its "cover of gold, weighing 38 marcs, studded with pearls and precious stones," a Bible of the ninth century, and other manuscripts dating from the tenth to the eighteenth century, and precious either on account of their artistic, archeological, or historical value. There must also be named a Psalter of the thirteenth century, in a wooden binding, executed by Jean de l'Angle, binder at Tours in the fifteenth century; and a fourteenth century Missal, according to the use of the Church in England, which formerly belonged to the Hungerford family, and afterwards to De Bueil, Admiral of France. These and other manuscripts are displayed in glass cases, and, disposed in chronological order, they enable the student to follow the progress of

miniature painting or illumination from the eighth to the eighteenth century.

Other remarkable manuscripts are a Latin dictionary of the ninth century, a collection of Greek historians of the eleventh, which Peiresc (1637) procured from Cyprus, an Ovid of the twelfth century, together with many old French romances.

The library possesses 400 incunabula, at the head of which must be mentioned the Mayence Bible of 1462, and the magnificent Tours Missal of 1485, on vellum. These treasures have not been without their vicissitudes, even quite recently. It will be remembered that the German operations in the war of 1870-71 extended as far as Tours. During this period the more valuable of the books and manuscripts were taken by the conservateur, M. Dorange, to Biarritz, whence they were brought back to their home after the termination of hostilities.

It must not be imagined that the rare monuments of the past constitute the only wealth of the collection. The library is rich also in modern treasures.\* Gifts of important works from government departments, no less than valuable donations and bequests of individuals of opulence and culture, are constantly adding to the stores of the institution. Even of English benefactors it has not a few.

The widely known firm of Mame, of Tours, also set an excellent example by presenting many of their important publications to the library, which in the space of twenty years has nearly doubled itself.

In conformity with the *ordonnance du roi* of 22nd February, 1839,† which laid down provisions for the regulation of the French

\* Such works as the following may be instanced :—"Catacombes de Rome," par Ferret, &c.; "Les Archives des Monuments Historiques;" "Les Cartes d'Etat-major;" "Musée des Archives Départementales;" "Annales Scientifiques de l'Ecole Normale." Among particular collections, presented to the library, the following are particularly worthy of mention :—The collection Salmon, of 155 volumes relating to the history of Touraine, &c.; the collection given by Mme. Vve. Lambron de Lignim, being her husband's collection of 2,000 volumes, manuscript and printed, also upon the local history. Then there is a beautifully bound collection of books on ornithology, bequeathed to the institution in 1863, among which are a fine Buffon, from the royal press, and Audubon's "Birds of America." A journalist's library, that of M. A. Oriant, of over 4,000 volumes upon political and literary subjects. The collection formed by the Marquis de la Ferté-Sénectère, being plays, &c., in various Italian dialects. The following recent acquisitions, purchased by the town council, will give an idea of the employment of the sums voted by that body :—1,592 volumes of local history, &c.; Viollet-le-Duc's "Dictionnaire du Mobilier;" "Glossaire de St. Palaye;" Larousse's "Dictionnaire Universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle." The last-named purchase is one which seems to me especially appropriate for small libraries, which upon many subjects may contain no other information than that to be found in such a repertory.

† The *ordonnance* was published at length in the *Moniteur Officiel*, of Feb. 24, 1839. This interesting document, the outcome of successive commissions, is a gentle attempt to introduce a system of common regulations for the French libraries. While aiming at reform and economy, justice and consideration were shown to those already in office, and in this regard its provisions contrast very favourably with recent measures in the same department nearer home.

public libraries, the library has been placed under a committee of eight members, nominated by the Minister of Public Instruction, presided over by the Maire, and meeting at least once a month to decide upon purchases and exchanges, and the employment of the funds it may vote for acquisition, compilation of catalogues, &c. A secretary of the committee is chosen from one of its members every year, and is re-eligible. Minutes are kept of each meeting, and are signed by the president, the secretary, and the conservateur. An account of the acquisitions has to be sent annually to the Minister of Public Instruction, to be added to the "Grand Livre des Bibliothèques de France."

The conservateur, as well as his assistants, is nominated by the Maire, before whom he has to submit, before each 1st of March, the budget for the following year. Among his numerous duties may be mentioned that of seeing that every article becoming the property of the library is immediately stamped. He is empowered to expel readers who do not conform to the rules, or who annoy or disturb other readers.

The library, in accordance with French custom, is closed from August 15 to October 15, and for a fortnight at Easter, and during these periods the books are dusted. Ordinarily, the library is open from noon to four in the afternoon, except on Sundays and Feasts. The reading-room on the ground floor offers roomy accommodation for thirty workers, and is furnished with books of reference, maps, magazines, and local periodicals. Books, except those placed in the reading-room, are asked for on small tickets, on which the applicant is enjoined to write his name, profession, and address, in addition to the title of the work desired. In a daily register are entered the names of all books thus communicated, and to whom. By article 24 of the *règlement*, romances and works on erotic subjects are communicated only to adults. The real force of this rule, it is hardly necessary to remark, depends upon the construction put on it by the conservateur or committee. The librarian may perhaps find such a rule useful to fall back upon should his reading-room become crowded. Unbound parts of works, unless scientific works, are not communicated to readers. No more than five works are to be given to a reader at one time. Copying or note-taking from costly illustrated works is to be done only in pencil. Tracings are allowed only in the case of geographical works. Measuring with compasses is forbidden. In considering this rule, which may appear to be of almost unduly restrictive tendency, it must be remembered that much of the drawing done in a provincial library is more or less a pastime, and does not mean the work accomplished in large central libraries. Why this is so is not, perhaps, obvious. One reason may be that a provincial library is necessarily more quiet and agreeable than a busy metropolitan reading-room. It, on the other hand, should not be forgotten that a book can only accomplish its mission by being

used, and it seems scarcely advisable to forbid the use of drawing instruments in trained and careful hands.

The copying of manuscript illumination is allowed when the original is protected by glass. This wise precaution is too often sadly neglected in many libraries. No manuscript may be copied, printed, or published without the authorisation of the Municipal Council, which will consider applications to this end addressed to the Maire. The editor of any work thus published engages to give two copies to the library, exclusive of the ordinary copyright obligation.

As to loan at home, men of science or of letters, and writers engaged upon literary and scientific works, residing at Tours, may, upon the authorisation of the Maire, enjoy the use of books in their dwellings. The applicant accompanies his request by mention of the works he has published, or is about to publish, and the Maire considers his application in consultation with the committee. Neither the more valuable works, especially manuscripts, nor dictionaries, nor periodical publications, nor books with folding plates, are allowed out. In looking at this rule, we must realise the difference in character between a French provincial library, which often contains hundreds of unique treasures, and one of our own free libraries, in which most of the collection is, I believe, such as love or money can replace when necessary. In ordinary cases the number of books lent out is limited to one manuscript or two printed volumes. A month is the maximum time allowed for the use of books lent out, but the conservateur may require their return at any time, and any one refusing compliance is liable to be erased from the list of persons authorised to borrow out. The library staff is equally subject with the public to the rules regulating out-loans. Inspection of the library is allowed under the conduct of the conservateur, and at hours when the library is not open to readers.

In 1875 it was decided by the Municipal Council to open the library every evening from the 1st of November to the 1st of May, except on Sundays and Festivals, and a separate part of the building was set apart for this purpose. The more precious manuscripts and printed books are not communicated in the evening, but a special register of works for evening service is kept. Evening readers desiring any book not on this register should make a written request for it on the previous day, it being strictly forbidden to take a light of any kind into the other parts of the library.

As to the catalogue of additions, which generally amount to about 1,000 volumes a-year, a book is kept in which new arrivals are entered and numbered as they are received, and the volumes themselves are kept in a separate room in the same order. At the expiration of every ten years these books are inscribed in alphabetical and systematic order respectively, in two volumes, which form supplements to the main catalogue, and are placed at the disposal of readers.

In conclusion, I should not omit to express my thanks to M. Dorange, the worthy conservateur, to whose publications or personal communications I am entirely indebted for the materials of the present paper. Nor should I forget to mention that, as far as I may judge, his catalogue of the manuscripts is a high testimony alike to his own diligent care for his charge, to the value and importance of the library, and to the liberality and enlightenment of the Maire and Municipal Council of Tours.

DISCUSSION.—The CHAIRMAN said that this was a very interesting paper, but he had hoped to hear that the Library possessed some MSS. of Alcuin, who was a very prolific writer.—Mr. TEDDEE was able to add a few items from a return kindly furnished by M. Dorange, in reply to a circular asking for information respecting French libraries. Theology and history form the chief features, as the library owes many accessions to the convents and religious houses broken up at the time of the Revolution. The library is also rich in MSS., incunabula, heraldry, and natural history formerly belonging to the Prince of Essling (Masséna), as well as in works connected with the province of Touraine, and in rarities of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, finely bound by Derôme, Capet, &c. The present number of printed books is 50,000 vols., and 2,000 MSS., and the average yearly increment is 500 vols.; but there are frequent extensive donations from private persons. About 15,000 vols. are annually consulted, and the number of readers is about 50 each day. There are no conditions of admission, and no limit of age. The library has no endowment, but the Government presents from time to time the large works of scientific travel issued under its auspices, and the municipal council of Tours votes each year 9,200 fr. (£368), from which the salaries of the librarian (£120) and sub-librarian (£80) are paid. The catalogue of printed books extends to 20 vols., in manuscript. The MSS. have been catalogued by the accomplished librarian, in that valuable series of French departmental libraries published at the expense of the Government. There is, besides, a special catalogue of incunabula, of bibliographical rarities, and the Touraine collection. A fine fifteenth-century wooden press holds 400 of the MSS., and a cabinet containing the MSS., with miniatures, includes a portion of the choice library of M. de Choiseul, the well-known bibliophile and disgraced minister of Louis XIV.—After some further discussion, in which Messrs. NICHOLSON, STEVENS and WELCH took part, a vote of thanks was unanimously passed to Mr. WILSON for his paper.

The following new bye-law was proposed:—

“That an institution subscribing to the association shall, for each half guinea annually subscribed, be entitled to send one representative to the meetings of the association, provided that any representative so nominated who shall not be engaged in library administration shall have no right of voting unless proposed and elected in the usual way.”

The discussion of this bye-law was adjourned until the next monthly meeting.

The following circular has been issued by the Council, in accordance with a resolution of the last annual meeting :—

"LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM,

"London, 1st June, 1881.

"SIR,—At the last annual meeting (held at Edinburgh) of the Library Association of the United Kingdom, an association which numbers among its members the heads of nearly all the important libraries in the country, the following resolution was unanimously adopted :—

"That it be an instruction to the Council to send to all bookbinders in the 'Bookbinders' Trade Directory' a circular letter containing such inquiries as it may be desirable to make, and inviting answers, suggestions, and scales of prices; and that the results be laid before the association at its next yearly meeting, together with such samples of binding as the Council may think fit to obtain."

"In pursuance of this resolution, the Council desire us to send you the appended list of questions, and would feel greatly obliged by any answers with which you may favour them. They feel that in numerous important points in relation to binding there is a want of settled opinion among librarians, and that on such points the experience of bookbinders is likely to be most valuable. And the result of any co-operation which the bookbinders are willing to accord to the librarians will, they feel, tend to promote a demand for good binding which will be advantageous to those engaged in the binding trade.

"They will be glad if any answers which you may give are numbered in correspondence with the questions, and they will be further happy to receive any other information or suggestions which you may think useful.

"Your obedient servants,

(Signed) "ERNEST C. THOMAS,  
"13, South Square, Gray's Inn, W.C.

"CHARLES WELCH,  
"Corporation Library, Guildhall, E.C."

1. Is it your opinion that the *best* (a) moroccos, (b) calfs, (c) vellums now used are less durable than the best leathers which formerly bore the same names?

2. If so, at about what dates do you consider the degeneration of such leathers began?

3. To what causes would you attribute it?

4. Are you willing to state your experience of injurious and uninjurious methods of colouring leather?

5. Have you any experience as to the leathers which offer respectively the most and the least resistance to (a) wear and tear, (b) damp, (c) heat, (d) gas, if gas does not act simply as a generator of heated air?

6. What is your experience of imitation leathers (the particular kinds being named)?

7. Can you report any new or unusual binding materials?

8. Or of rebacking, repairing, and renovating old bindings? Have you any suggestions to offer?

9. What experience have you of the re-sewing of wire-sewn books?

10. Have you any novelties in binding to recommend or suggest?

11. Are you willing (a) to state your prices for binding according to the appended specification; (b) to allow your name and address to be published by the Council as stating such prices; (c) to furnish, if desired, samples of books so bound, and at such prices, for exhibition at the next annual meeting of the Library Association, to be held in London in September next; (d) to furnish, if desired, for exhibition at the same time, any other specimens of binding, with prices affixed, and if so, of what kind?

## SPECIFICATION.

The books to be sewn all along, with the first and last sheets overcast, on strong cords, the slips to be drawn in all along, and the backs made close (half flexible). Half bound, with corners of same materials as shown in the scale.

Smooth cloth sides, edges cut, sprinkled, and burnished; or, if so directed, top edge only cut, &c., the others trimmed and left with proof. End papers to be of stout Cobb's paper, with cloth joints in quarto and folio books. Lettered with author, short title, and date—the lettering done by type if desired. Gilt fillets, but no other tooling.

All materials of best quality, and the work done carefully. No charge for extra thickness, unless the thickness, measured inside the boards, is more than one-third the width of the book. No charge for plates and folding maps, if less than ten in number and not mounted. Two-page plates to be guarded so as to open up flat.

Prices for binding, as above, per volume, for demy 12mo, crown 8vo, demy 8vo, royal 8vo, imperial 8vo, crown 4to, demy 4to, royal 4to, imperial 4to, crown folio, demy folio, royal folio, and imperial folio, in—1, Morocco, (*a*) Levant (French), (*b*) Cape, or second quality morocco; 2, Calf; 3, Persian; 4, Vellum; 5, Parchment; 6, Roan; 7, Basil; 8, Cloth; 9, Brown or slate buckram; 10, Difference (if any) for full binding in buckram; 11, Price for resewing and casing.

## LIBRARY NOTES.

ALDERSHOT.—In accordance with Her Majesty's commands, transmitted through the Horse Guards to the general officer commanding at the camp, the Victoria Soldiers' Library, which is kept up at the Queen's expense, for the use of the troops at the Aldershot station, is in future to be managed by a permanent committee consisting of Colonel Gossett, Royal Engineers, as president; Lieut.-Col. Hayward, 45th Regiment, and Capt. Knollys, Brigade Major, Royal Artillery, as members.

BRITISH MUSEUM.—A Parliamentary return, lately issued, gives the total number of persons admitted to view the general collections (exclusive of readers) in 1880, as 655,688. To the reading-room there were 133,842 visitors, which, added to the numbers studying maps, manuscripts, sculpture, coins, medals, gold ornaments, the gem-room, natural history, and print, made up a total of 839,374 students and searchers. With a view to expediting the service of the reading-room, by bringing in close connection to it books often required by readers, the galleries in the room itself will receive a new selection of books, to consist of additional works of reference, and generally such books as have been found to be most often asked for by students. This re-arrangement has been already fairly commenced.

ROME.—Conte Ugo Balzani has resigned the office of Keeper of the MSS. in the Vittorio Emmanuele Library.

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